

ORIGINAL



Andrea Gaston

From: Kathleen Buonocore <bogracie@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2016 8:09 PM
To: Tobin-Web; Forese-Web; Little-Web; Stump-Web; RBurns-Web
Subject: SSVEC Rate Increase Request *opposition*

E-01575A-15-0312

Chairman Little, Commissioners,

I am sending this letters, as published in today's Sierra Vista Herald as it states, much then I can thoughts on the SSVEC rate increase-

Do the opposite

To the Editor:

For about a year, the Sulfur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) has been producing a seemingly never ending stream of vitriol against its solar customers. A recent e-mail appeals to its members to write the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC), in support of raising fixed charges to customer bills and levying new penalties on rooftop solar.

There has been coordinated action among various electricity providers in Arizona and across the U.S. to impose new fees and penalties on solar customers. SSVEC's actions come not long after a report published by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), on the topic of "net metering reform." ALEC is the right-wing think tank that has teamed up with Koch Brothers and other entities to undermine rooftop solar programs. SSVEC is just one more on the anti-solar bandwagon, but in this case, I think it is a ploy to distract customers from the main event.

The big changes, currently being considered before the ACC, are

different rules for solar customers and a new rate scale for everyone. The major parts of the (non-solar) bill are a fixed monthly charge and a kilowatt-hour charge. SSVEC will increase the monthly charge from \$10 to \$25. The kilowatt-hour charge will go down. As SSVEC has pointed out, of the regular customers, the people who stand to pay an increased amount will be the 60 percent whose electricity bill is less than average — in other words, those who conserve electricity.

Solar customers are really upset because their monthly charge would ultimately be increased from \$10 to \$50. From a customer perspective, that is the most painful change. However, since solar customers only make up a small percentage of the customer base, the net proceeds to SSVEC are dwarfed by the increased access charge to regular customers. SSVEC's campaign to convince us that solar customers are "taking unfair advantage" of the regular customers is just a distraction while they impose huge increases in the monthly charge on everyone.

SSVEC is ignoring the benefits

of solar. A summary of 11 recent studies indicated that individuals and businesses that "went solar" delivered a net benefit to their utility and their whole community. Solar benefits include avoided energy costs from fossil fuel plants, decreased losses from transmission, reduced exposure to volatile fuel prices, increased grid resiliency, and avoided environmental cleanup costs. That doesn't count benefits to the community of new jobs, better air quality, and mitigation against climate change. Not all studies showed a net benefit due to solar, but the ones that didn't were written or commissioned by utilities.

Presumably a utility's rate structure can be used to promote societal values. I believe it would behoove us to do exactly the opposite of SSVEC with respect to the regular users. Discourage energy use by decreasing (or at least not increasing) monthly access costs and increasing kilowatt-hour usage costs.

Leave the solar folks alone.

Elna Otter
Benson

thank you for your consideration,

Kathleen Buonocore

Sierra Vista

Arizona Corporation Commission

DOCKETED

MAY 23 2016

DOCKETED BY

KG

2016 MAY 23 PM 4 11
RECEIVED
AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL